

FOR YOUR INFORMATION—

A W D I A EDITORIAL

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WE CAN LEARN FROM THE SANITATION WORKERS' STRIKE

The Southern Regional Council -- one of the soundest civil rights organizations in the nation, with headquarters in Atlanta -- says that our lengthy Memphis garbage strike has underlined the failure of America to understand clearly Negro demands in civil rights struggles.

At WDIA, we agree fully with a special report by the Council which says that white America seems unable to grasp that there are hurts in deprivation to the mind as well as to the stomach. The Council's report said that events of the first five weeks of the Memphis strike set a pattern under which the Negro community became unified, but met stubborn resistance from virtually all elements of our city's white society.

It seems to us, at WDIA, that most members of the white community completely misunderstand the strike situation. Most of them insist, as Mayor Henry Loeb has said, in believing the fiction that this is only a labor-management dispute. But anything that affects one poor Negro has effect on all poor Negroes. And when it affects a majority of poor Negroes it clearly spills over into a matter of civil rights.

White persons have complained because Negro ministers play such a prominent role in a garbage man's fight. They can't see the connection.

But Dr. H. Ralph Jackson, a national executive of the A-M-E Church, said, "We ministers must take part in this strike because we are to blame. If it weren't for our teaching that a man must not take the law into his own hands, and that he must not harm his fellow, then these men would go out to those trucks and rip apart the people who are taking their jobs, and taking the bread from their family's mouths. We told them not to be violent. And they aren't. And we have to help them find another way out."

As the strike progresses, it is clear to us, as it is to the Southern Regional Council, that broad scars may be left between the white and Negro community. The Negro feels, with some justification, that the white community has by-passed his battle for a better economic place in life.

What happens to the garbage men, happens to all of us.

We will pay, in one way or another, for the long duration of this strike.

Editorials Are 7 Days a Week, WDIA
A.M. 2:35-7:35-10:35 35-2:35-4:35-6:35-8:35-10:35 (1-35 Sat)

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